

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please delete paragraph [0081] (of the published specification) and insert in lieu thereof the following replacement paragraph:

As in the case of a conventional pneumatic conveyor, the bottles are pushed by pressurized air supplied from a duct 60 along a pneumatic transport channel 62 functioning as a support rail for the necks 64 of the bottles. A bottle counter allows the entrance of the required number of bottles, corresponding to the number of treatment station, i.e. of plasma generators 4. A precisely positioned stopper means stops the bottles at a precise position and a separating / positioning means positions the bottles beneath the respective plasma generators 4. Different separating means can be used : for example a screw conveyor or a comb with conical teeth, or further, stopper means activated one after the other by a signal from photodiodes indicating the presence of the bottles. The bottle positioning mechanism positions the bottles accurately along the axes of the electrodes 54a, 54b of the plasma generators. The walls 61 forming the pneumatic tube in the treatment zone 20 can move to provide an access to the bottles 3. The upper electrode 54a moves downward and the lower electrode 54b moves upwards. The lower electrode 54b is provided with a mechanism for rotating the bottle via friction shoes. The neck 64 of the bottle slides, during this rotation on the lower part of 66 of the housing of the upper electrode. A spring mounted on the lower electrode (not illustrated) exerts the pressure necessary for ensuring, on the one hand, that no friction occurs between the bottle and the lower electrode and, on the other hand, that the friction between the housing (which is, made, for example, of Teflon TEFLON, which a brand of Polytetrafluoroethylene, or more commonly PTFE) of the upper electrode and the neck of the bottle is adequate. The surface treatment by the plasma starts upon the filling of the bottle, with the gaseous mixture used as the treatment gas.

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